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PURCHASING PROBLEMS

BY W. G. REAVES
Assistant Purchasing Agent

Looking over this week's report on "Price Shifts" we note the picture isn't bright at all. The prices on quite a number of major items are still inclined to be on the upward trend. Metals and Chemicals again led major industrial commodity groups in the number of price increases, but there were scattered advances in the other fields as well.

Additional increases are reported by the steel industry in structural and tubular goods. In the paint group, white lead and linseed oil are up. Heavy fuel oil is slated for an advance, probably in a few weeks. Oil companies point out that recent increases in the price of crude oil are not yet reflected in quotations on heavy fuel oil.

Predicts More Strikes

The problem of negotiating for wage increases is again coming into the limelight. In all probability, there will be several large strikes in the next few months. A recent OPA report shows clearly that the 14 percent increase in wage rates of industrial workers, between January 1945 and August 1946, actually added only 2.4 percent to the production costs of industry, and it would easily have been absorbed by profit without adding a cent to prices. Never-the-less, it is indicated that increases in wage rates in the coming months will certainly add to the cost of production; thus reflecting back to the consumers.

Stock More Coal

A recent report on the coal market urged consumers to stock as much coal as possible, with the limitations of SFAW orders. These orders provide for additional storage by using strip coal or coal declared surplus. We urge that coal users of this Commission stock coal sufficiently to last in the event of a long and drawn-out coal strike when the present wages, working hours and conditions expire on March 31, 1947. There is, of course, the possibility of an agreement prior to this expiration date; however, it will be wise to be prepared in case an agreement is not reached.

From time to time we have cautioned about building up inventories

(Continued on page three)

SAFETY CHIEF



James P. Dodge

Dodge Is Named For Safety Job

Raleigh—James P. Dodge of Raleigh, a veteran highway employee who has just returned from six years Army service, will conduct an intensive safety campaign in the State Highway and Public Works Commission, State Highway Engineer W. Vance Baise has announced.

The safety specialist will be responsible for instituting a complete safety educational program within the Commission to reduce the number of accidents among the 9,000 highway and prison employees, Baise said.

To Promote Safety

"The highway department is one of the largest operators of equipment in the state," Baise said, "and it is essential that the department takes the lead in promoting a coordinated, full-time safety program." The Commission owns approximately 4,600 units of equipment.

A graduate of John B. Stetson University at DeLand, Fla., Dodge joined the highway department in 1920. He worked as office maintenance engineer in McDowell county, office engineer for the state maintenance engineer and as senior claims adjuster with the location and claim department. He left in 1940 to take a commission in the Army where he served with the 30th (Old Hickory) Division of the

(Continued on page four)

STEARNS, SENIOR AUDITOR, NAMED TO RECEIVE 1946 McCRARY AWARD

Raleigh—Cecil Linwood Stearns, amiable, hard-working Senior Auditor in the Accounting Department here, has been named 1946 winner of the annual McCrary Award "for his outstanding accomplishments and very efficient performance of his duties."

The Awards Committee, headed by Chairman A. H. Graham, selected Stearns from the list of entries and nominations after careful study of the merits of each individual case. Highway Auditor Sam N. Smith, who heads the Accounting Department and is also a member of the Awards Committee, gave his approval of the Committee's selection.

Awarding Scheduled

Stearns was scheduled to receive the certificate of award at the January 22 meeting of the Highway Commission. A full account of the awarding ceremony will be carried in the next issue of this publication.

The 50-year-old auditor, a veteran of 25 years continuous service with the highway department, is responsible for the handling of all payrolls and expense vouchers and issuance of all salary and expense checks to the entire personnel of the State Highway and Public Works Commission.

In the nomination of Stearns submitted by Clayton High, Freda Webb and Janie C. Hunt, the sponsors pointed out that he directed "the prompt and accurate preparation of 105,000 payroll checks amounting to more than \$13,000,000 during 1946.

Lauded For Efficiency

"A large share of the credit goes to Mr. Stearns for the reputation we enjoy in connection with the handling of the payrolls," they stated, "rendering efficient, honest service to thousands of state highway employees, thereby helping the morale and creating good will—an asset far beyond any monetary value, characteristic of friendship, loyalty and trust."

A veteran of World War I, Stearns is married to Martha L. Laprand of Paris, France. Mr. and Mrs. Stearns have three children, Raymond L., 23, Jennie Marie, 18, (Continued on page four)

WINNER



Cecil L. Stearns

Traffic Volume Breaks Records

Raleigh—Highway traffic in December 1946 was greater in volume than any previous December in the history of North Carolina, James S. Burch, engineer of statistics and planning for the State Highway and Public Works Commission, has announced.

The volume was 29 percent higher than in December 1945 and two percent above the previous record December in 1941. Burch attributed these increases to an all-time high in motor vehicle registration, prosperous agriculture, inflationary conditions and unusually good weather.

Highway traffic during 1946 almost topped the record 1941 figure when new cars, tires and gasoline were plentiful, the official reported.

Using 1940 as a base year, Burch measured traffic volume during the past seven years, as follows: 1940, 100; 1941, 113.1; 1942, 75.4; 1943, 62.3; 1944, 64.0; 1945, 74.9; 1946, 112.2.

All traffic volume data is obtained from 20 full-time traffic recorders which have been operating continuously at the same scattered locations for the past nine years.

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WITH HONORS

Cecil L. Stearns has occupied the same chair in the Accounting Department here for over 25 years.

He joined the highway department in its formative days after North Carolina decided to consolidate its state road system under the control of a state highway agency. Beginning as a clerk in 1921 handling claim checks and vouchers, Stearns stuck to his accounting work and his beloved chair for over a quarter of a century.

Now he is a Senior Auditor who personally directed the payment of over \$13,000,000 in wages to Commission personnel in 1946. Stearns did more than rock back in his swivel chair during his 25 years of loyal service. Additional proof of this fact came recently when he was announced winner of the annual McCrary Award for 1946.

The Awards Committee selected the quiet, unassuming employee to receive the Award for his streamlining efficiency and outstanding service in the Payroll Section of the Accounting Department during 1946.

Stearns has proven himself worthy of the Commission's highest single honor given an employee and is to be congratulated. He is the second recipient of the McCrary Award which was originated in 1945 in honor of D. B. McCrary of Asheboro, former veteran

highway official who died in October 1946. The first award went to J. W. (Buck) Upton in Fayetteville, division mechanic in the third division.

The selection of a second recipient for the honored Award should remind all employees that the 1947 winner of the McCrary Award is now in the making. Does your efficiency, originality and resourceful ability place you in the running?

TAKE THE LEAD

While many people do not realize it, the Highway Commission is one of North Carolina's largest operators of vehicular equipment. It possesses approximately 4,000 units of various types of equipment scattered over the 100 counties of the state.

So it was a wise step when the Highway Commission attacked the accident and safety problem directly by appointing James P. Dodge of Raleigh as a full-time specialist to direct a full-time safety program among the 9,000 employees.

A veteran highway employee, Dodge is well qualified to promote the Commission's first full-time, complete safety program. He has worked with the Commission since 1920 as an office engineer and senior claim adjuster, and is a member of the N. C. Bar Association.

The NORTH CAROLINA HIGHWAYS AND PUBLIC WORKS will cooperate fully with Dodge in his educational program to promote the cause of safety.

It is fine to see the Highway Commission, one of North Carolina's largest state departments, take an early lead in the safety program sponsored and endorsed by President Truman and Governor Cherry.

HERE TO STAY

It may now be said without hesitation that the motor vehicle is here to stay on the highways and county roads of

North Carolina.

James S. Burch, amiable, able statistician for the Highway Commission, has produced some interesting figures which cinch the matter.

If you are still in doubt, let's see what happened during the past year in the Tar Heel state. It seems that 1946 proved to be an all-time record year for gasoline sales, gasoline tax revenue, the number of motor vehicles registered and traffic volume on state highways.

There were 583,763,880 gallons of gasoline fully taxed for highway purposes during 1946 to produce a revenue of \$36,963,871.

Figured at a modest 10 miles to the gallon, the total consumption of gallon would indicate a staggering 5,837,638,800 miles of travel. You amateur statisticians and comparison-lovers can take it from there.

EDITORIAL COMMENT

GOOD APPROACH

Members of the North Carolina State Employees Association in the Ninth Highway Division, are deserving of genuine praise for the way in which they presented their case to the State Senators and Representatives of this area, at a dinner meeting at Hotel Hickory, Wednesday night.

They set forth the facts in a straight-forward way, but made no demands—leaving it up to the members of the General Assembly to deal justly and fairly with them.

The Record is much impressed with this manner of approach, at a time when strong-arm methods have come to be the style. In the first place, the highway workers said frankly that they formed their association in order to advance the welfare of the group and prevent unionization, which was being urged by some of these in the ranks.

The two chief objectives of the highway workers are wor-

thy of general support:

First, they want the State Retirement System strengthened so that those who participated under the provisions of the act may be assured a subsistence pension. At present, some of the workers who have had to retire receive less than two dollars per week, it was revealed.

Second, the fact that wages being paid highway employees are far below those paid by private contractors for the same work, is proof that pay scales must be raised if we are to keep our highway organization functioning properly. With some of those in the lower wage brackets receiving less than one hundred dollars per month it should be obvious why the State Highway Department has been finding it impossible to maintain personnel on an efficient basis.

—HICKORY RECORD.

"No Diversion"

There should be no diversion of funds from the Highway Department to the General Fund, as the money already in the Highway Department's treasury is urgently needed on building, rebuilding and maintaining state highways. Also, there should be no further diversion of a portion of the State Highway Commission's funds to municipalities for maintenance of streets. The State Highway Commission is already paying a portion of that cost, in addition to furnishing certain maintenance.

A host of other important state problems face the 1947 legislators. It is up to them to consider carefully, decide wisely and act accordingly, in the knowledge that the eyes of the state are upon them.

—FOREST CITY COURIER.

"Our doubts are traitors and makes us lose the good we oft might win, by fearing to attempt." —Shakespeare.

* * *

"An inferiority complex is a fine thing, but the right people don't have it."

Highway Lettings Expected To Top \$3,500,000 In First Month of 1947

Raleigh—The Highway Commission has announced plans for letting more than \$3,500,000 in road construction contracts during the month of January.

Low bids totalling \$1,620,875.55 were received January 14 on nine projects involving 52 miles of road work and the construction of two bridges. Another letting of 12 projects was scheduled for January 30 when contracts involving 75 miles of road work would cost an estimated \$2,279,100.

The January 14 projects and low bidders were:

Federal-Aid Projects

Bertie—Grading, surfacing and structures of 8.27 miles on NC 97 from Windsor to Powellsville, E. W. Grannis Const. Co., Fayetteville, \$239,558.00.

Halifax—Grading and surfacing of 6.32 miles between Scotland Neck and the Martin County line, Atlantic Bitulithic Co., Washington, D. C., \$68,000.00.

Brunswick—Construction of two concrete bridges and approaches at Alligator Creek and Brunswick River on US 17, 74 and 76; roadway, E. W. Grannis Const. Co., \$91,123.50; structures, V. P. Loftis Const. Co., Charlotte, \$220,820.35.

Franklin-Nash-Halifax—Grading, surfacing and structures of 6.41 miles on NC 561 from Centerville to Essex, roadway, E. H. Hines Const. Co., Greenwood, S. C., \$210,487.00; structures, Harvey H. Stewart, Charlotte, \$37,936.40.

Montgomery-Randolph-Davidson—Grading, surfacing and structures of 11.32 miles on NC 109 from Uwharrie to Denton; roadway, A. B. Burton Const. Co., Lynchburg, Va., \$339,153.70; structures, John H. Brinkley, Thomasville, \$100,409.10.

Scotland-Robeson—Grading, surfacing and structures of 5.77 miles between Johns and Maxton; roadway, Zeigler-Cline Const. Co., Fayetteville, \$75,063.00; structures, E. W. Grannis Co., \$15,021.00.

Stokes—Grading and surfacing of 3.31 miles of NC 772 from US 311 to Dillard, Kiker & Yount, Reidsville, \$50,199.00.

Watauga—Grading and surfacing of 2.33 miles between Boone and Bamboo, W. E. Graham & Sons, Cleveland, \$90,792.00.

Betterment Project

Alleghany—Surfacing of 8.0 miles on NC 93 from US 221 to Piney Creek, W. E. Graham & Sons, \$82,312.50.

The January 30 letting was listed as:

Federal-Aid Projects

Bertie—Grading and surfacing of 8.35 miles on NC 308 from a point approximately three miles east of Lewiston to a point approximately 4.5 miles northwest of Windsor.

Chowan—Grading and surfacing of 8.90 miles from intersection with NC 32 at Valhalle to Cannons Ferry Road.

Perquimans—Grading and surfacing of 2.77 miles from a point approximately six miles east of Center Hill to Woodland Avenue in Hertford.

Tyrrell—Construction of a bridge .09 miles long to replace portion of roadway on the relocation of US 64 west of Columbia.

Bladen—Grading and surfacing of 11.26 miles on NC 242 from a point near Bladenboro to US 701.

Columbus—Grading, surfacing and structures of 5.92 miles from US 76 at Cerro Gordo north to a point near Evergreen.

Pender—Construction of culverts on NC 53 between a point approximately four miles east of Burgaw and Jacksonville.

Davie—Grading and surfacing of 8.05 miles on NC 801 from a point near Farmington to a point on US 601 5.8 miles south of the Davie-Yadkin county line.

Forsyth—Grading, surfacing and structure of 4.25 miles on US 52 from the north city limits of Winston-Salem northwest toward Mt. Airy.

Yancey—Grading, surfacing and structures of 6.8 miles from US 19-E one mile east of Burnsville north to NC 197 near Green Mountain Depot.

Buncombe—Grading and structures of 4.68 miles on US 19 and 23 from a point east of the Haywood-Buncombe county line east to the end of Pole Creek Bridge.

Cherokee—Bituminous surfacing of 14.11 miles of US 64 between the Tennessee state line and the junction with NC 60.

ENGINEERS OF STATE HOLD ANNUAL MEETING

Raleigh—The 29th annual meeting of the North Carolina Society of Engineers was scheduled here January 23-25 with the Raleigh club acting as host for the sessions.

The program included an address, "Inter-State or Super Highways," by Commissioner Thomas H. MacDonald of the PRA, Washington, D. C.

Otters in China and India are trained to direct fish into nets.

N. C. RANKS HIGH

North Carolina ranked high among southern states in construction contracts let during the first 11 months of 1946, the MANUFACTURERS RECORD reported in its December issue.

In highway construction contracts, North Carolina ranked second to Texas. The Lone Star state let \$85,631,000 in construction contracts, as compared with the Tar Heel state's \$26,784,000.

North Carolina also was among eight southern states which let more than \$15,000,000 in contracts for public buildings.

PURCHASING PROBLEMS

(Continued from page one)

Watch Your Inventories

ies during these "unpredictable days." We still do not think it advisable to build up supplies on normal delivery items; however, there are some exceptions. Some items such as steel, copper, lumber, paper, chemical, etc., are still in strong demand, and it is urged that you do not allow stocks to get too low on these commodities.

In a recent trade journal, in reading "Pages From A Buyer's Notebook," we read the following pertaining to "Rush Orders," and we believe it is good enough to pass on to you readers. Here it is:

P. D. Q.

Rush orders, which do not allow the purchasing officer sufficient time to do a thoroughgoing and workman like job of buying, are the bane of every purchasing agent's existence. He may find some measure of satisfaction in the ability to meet the emergency, but he is rarely able to take pride in that sort of procurement and it doesn't look good in the year-end audit of company costs or purchasing performance.

One of our production men sent in a requisition the other day with the notation "PDQ", meaning "Pretty Damn Quick". It reflected the wartime philosophy that delivery is the only thing that counts. But it gave me the opening to point out that these initials have another meaning for the purchasing agent, for in our book every purchase must involve the consideration of:

Price

Delivery

Quality

Time and timing are essential of any successful purchasing program. They should not be consistently sacrificed to cover up lack of foresight in regard to

Prison Escapes

Low In January

Raleigh—The Prison Department completed the first 15 days of 1947 with more captures than escapes, Prison Director Clyde O. Robinson announced.

There were seven escapes recorded and 11 escapees captured.

Camp ratings for January 1-15 were:

Three Stars
(No Escapes)

Central Prison, Woman's Prison and all others with the exception of the following.

Two Stars
(One Escape)

Catawba 903, Durham 503, Davidson 602 and Dix Hill.

One Star
(Two Escapes)

NONE.

Non-Star
(More Than Two Escapes)

Richmond 706.

material needs. The great majority of rush requisitions could be avoided by reasonable planning, and cooperation to eliminate unnecessary instances of this sort should be a part of company policy. Quite aside from the nuisance and inconvenience involved, haste cost real money.

It is a pleasure for this department to handle "rush orders" where an emergency actually exists. However, from the number of rush orders now being received daily, especially for printing, it is doubtful that all which are marked "rush" are actually cases of emergency. More foresight in some instances would eliminate some of these. Please don't misconstrue this as "preaching as we are only trying to bring the rush orders to a minimum.

For those of you who may not already be aware of the fact, this department recently placed orders for approximately fifteen carloads of sign posts to be used for "load-limit" signs on the county bridges throughout the state. Shipments on these orders should begin within the next thirty days and should be completed in approximately six months. In some divisions it may be necessary to borrow sign posts from other divisions, to keep this work progressing, before shipments arrive, as it will be impossible for the shipper to make shipments of more than three or four cars per week.

The world's tiniest carnivorous animal is the least weasel. The largest is the Alaska brown bear. Both are natives of Alaska.

Division Roundup

Sixth Division

Division Engineer L. E. Whitfield has given a brief report of work on road in Chatham county hard-surfaced or under construction during 1946. He said that "the Department has moved as fast as possible under prevailing conditions and in spite of delays due to shortages of materials, labor and equipment, extensive road improvements have been completed and other projects planned for the next construction season are under way."

Commissioner Henry Jordan reported earlier in an address at Siler City that Chatham had been allotted 42 miles of improved roads for 1946-47.

Tenth Division

More than 325,000 tons of gravel will be used on Western North Carolina's farm-to-market roads to help keep farmer and motorists out of the mud this spring, Division Engineer J. C. Walker said in a recent article printed in the Asheville TIMES.

Walker said that contracts have been let to 10 stone and gravel-crushing plants for the material. These plants and contractors were listed as Leicester, Lambert Brothers; Fletcher, W. H. Anderson; Brevard, McCrary Transfer Service; Franklin, Nantahala Stone Co.; Bakersville, McCrary Transfer Service; Candler, National Truck Service; Woodrow, McCrary Transfer Service; Addie, Southern Stone Co.

Assistant Division Engineer W. N. Corkill reported the return J. C. Northcott to highway service. Northcott was road oil supervisor for many years but has been ill for over a year. He has recovered sufficiently to return to work and will take the position of Senior Highway Inspector. He worked in the eastern part of the state for many years prior to his transfer to the 10th Division in 1931.

Mrs. A. B. Gossett visited in Kentucky, Ohio and Indiana during her vacation before Christmas and reports having a marvelous time.

Mrs. C. R. Gardner, stenographer in the Right-of-Way Department, has returned from a vacation in Miami where she reported a "wonderful time."

CRBA MEETS

Columbia, S. C.—The Carolina Road Builders Association held its annual meeting here January 17 to discuss future highway programs in the Carolinas.

State Highway Engineer W. Vance Baise of North Carolina was among the guests attending.

Conference Held To Discuss Possible Plans For Aerial Map Survey of State

Raleigh—Plans for a complete aerial mapping survey of North Carolina were discussed at a conference held here January 15 by representatives of state departments and C. H. Davey, a mapping expert with the U. S. Geological Survey.

Chairman A. H. Graham of the State Highway and Public Works Commission, who arranged the conference, said that the meeting was held to study the possibilities of a survey and that no action was taken by the group.

Davey estimated that an aerial survey of North Carolina would cost \$4,800,000 and would take at least five years to complete. He said that the U. S. Geological Survey would share half of the costs of the survey and would direct the work of making the surveys.

Suggests Map Types

The federal expert suggested that a planometric aerial map

without contours be made of the eastern coastal areas, and that a contour topographic map be made of the piedmont section of the state. He explained that most of western North Carolina was being mapped by the Tennessee Valley Authority, and that a U. S. Geological Survey map would coincide with the TVA work.

Other officials attending the conference were J. M. Jarrett, director of the division of engineering of the State Board of Health; W. H. Riley, division of water resources and engineering, Department of Conservation and Development; Jasper L. Stuckey, State Geologist, Department of Conservation and Development; E. D. Burchard, chairman of the mapping committee, N. C. Society of Engineers; James L. Hales of the N. C. State Planning Board; and R. Getty Browning, location engineer for the State Highway and Public Works Commission.

DODGE

(Continued from page one)

118th Field Artillery and was separated from the service with the rank of Lieutenant-Colonel.

Member of N. C. Bar

Dodge was admitted to the North Carolina Bar Association in 1927, and served as president of the N. C. Department Reserve Officers Association in 1936-37. Mr. and Mrs. Dodge are the parents of three sons: Lt. David Dodge, USAAF, a 1942 graduate of N. C. State College; William H. Dodge of Augusta, Ga.; and Robert J. Dodge, a freshman at N. C. State.

Baise said that Dodge, Traffic Engineer Robert A. Burch and a representative from each of the 10 state highway divisions would attend the third annual training course for vehicle fleet safety engineers to be held at State College January 20-24.

STEARNS

(Continued from page one) and Cecil Andre, 10.

Stearns was born in Maine, spent part of his childhood in Georgia but has lived 32 years in Raleigh and considers himself a native of the Tar Heel state.

The McCrary Award was originated in 1945 in honor of D. B. McCrary of Asheboro, a former chairman of the Highway Commission well-known for his deep interest in better roads for North Carolina, to provide a method of

Outdoor Facts

The Northern Sea Otter habitually swims on its back.

A baby crow is called a simp.

The strawberry is not a berry. It is a fruit. The banana is not a fruit. It is a berry.

From July 31, 1945 to June 30, 1946, the state of Maine spent \$53,218.45 to cover the cost of damage done by deer. This amount included crop damage claims, wardens' time and expenses.

The salmon can swim as fast as 30 miles an hour. A whale's top speed is 10 miles an hour, which is pretty good stepping for an 80 ton mammal.

Most living ornithologist have never seen the rare ivorybilled woodpecker in the wild state.

Of some 150,000,000 pounds of fresh fish produced in the United States annually, nearly two-thirds comes from the American waters of the Great Lakes.

recognizing an efficient, resourceful employee whose ideas, suggestions or plans have advanced the work of the Commission.

McCrary died in Asheboro October 28, 1946 after suffering a stroke of paralysis the previous day.

Today's Chuckles

Jack: "What advantage has pajamas over the old-fashioned nightgown?"

Sak: "I dunno. I've never worn pajamas over an old-fashioned nightgown."

Panting and perspiring, two Irishmen on a tandem bicycle at last got to the top of the steep hill.

"That was a stiff climb, Pat," said the first.

"Sure, and it was that," said Mike. "And if I hadn't kept the brakes on, we would have gone backward."

A lady got on a bus and took the only empty seat, next to a harmless-looking drunk. Soon she opened a map of Manchuria and began to study it. The drunk gazed at the map for a while and finally addressed the lady in an interested tone: "Sure, you're on the right bus?" he asked.

Mama Skunk to Baby Skunk: "Do you feel well, dear? You smell faint."

MinnieQuarts, Atlanta's famous cow, gave birth to a son recently. She named him "Buddy Milk."

"Roomers are flying," said the moron when the boarding house blew up.

Asylum Patient: "Who are you?" Newcomer: "I'm the superintendent."

A. P.: "Oh, yeah! It won't take long for them to knock that notion out of your head. I was Napoleon when I came here."

Sak: "That's a beautiful stickpin."

Mac: "Yes, isn't it? It once belonged to a millionaire."

Sak: "Who?"

Mac: "Woolworth."

Judge: "What's your name and address?"

Liza: "What am de diffence Jedge? Yo' wouldn't come to see me no how."

Jones: "Why do you keep jumping off the train at every station?"

Smith: "My doctor told me I had a very bad heart, and I'm buying train tickets station-to-station."

"My husband is a big gun in this business—he's been fired seven times."

"My girl has two of the most beautiful legs in the world."

"How do you know?"

"I counted 'em."